

OLL 85-0891
26 February 1985

SSCI

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing on Central America for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

1. On 26 February 1985, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) was briefed on the situation in Central America by Ambassador Langhorne A. Motley, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Robert M. Gates, Deputy Director for Intelligence, CIA and John L. Helgerson, Director, Office of African and Latin American Analysis, Directorate of Intelligence, CIA. The briefing took place in 219 Senate Hart Office Building, from 1000 to 1200. A transcript was taken. [redacted] 25X1

2. Present from the Committee were: [redacted] 25X1

Dave Durenberger (R., MN)	Patrick J. Leahy (D., VT)
Chairman	Vice Chairman
William V. Roth (R., DE)	Lloyd Bentsen (D., TX)
Mitch McConnell (R., KY)	Sam Nunn (D., GA)
Chic Hecht (R., NV)	Thomas F. Eagleton (D., MO)
Arlen Specter (R., PA)	Ernest F. Hollings (D., SC)
Frank H. Murkowski (R., AK)	Bill Bradley (D., NJ)

Present from the Committee staff were:

Bernard McMahon	Gary Chase
Thomas Blau	Robin Cleveland
James Dykstra	John Elliff
Keith Hall	Larry Kettlewell
Edward Levine	Michael Mattingly
Joseph Mayer	Eric Newsom

3. The briefing was billed as a State Department overview of Administration policy toward Central America and the current situation there with back-up on intelligence analysis by CIA representatives. Ambassador Motley handled the bulk of the briefing. He began with responses to a number of questions raised by SSCI Chairman Durenberger and Vice Chairman Leahy. The discussion covered the regional economic situation, the status of Contadora reconciliation talks, human rights progress in El Salvador, electoral prospects in Guatemala, and the military build-up in Cuba. This was followed by brief comments by Ambassador Motley on a country-by-country basis, noting trends and key developments. [redacted]

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4. The second hour of the briefing was consumed by questions and answers, with each Senator taking turn. Among topics covered were debt repayment burdens, the Mexican/Guatemalan refugee problem, drug trafficking through Central America, and Honduran unease about long-term U.S. support. Senator Hollings initiated a discussion

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[redacted] He contended that the U.S. basically wanted a U.S. policy in Central America that would prevent the development of a Cuba-style Nicaragua but would keep U.S. troops out of the area. The Ambassador agreed to supply the SSCI with a report concluding the "Contras" probably have not committed the atrocities attributed to them in numerous press articles.

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5. Mr. Gates provided background and details on the military build-up and modernization in Cuba, and commented on the implication of this build-up for U.S. security, particularly should a military conflict occur in Europe. He also elaborated on Cuban government involvement in drug trafficking and commented on the conclusions of a recent National Intelligence Estimate on Nicaragua indicating the probable continued growth of an anti-Sandinista insurgency.

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[redacted] The briefing concluded with one follow-up item for the DI: an answer to Senator Roth's question about the quantity of drugs transiting Nicaragua and Cuba enroute to the U.S.

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[redacted] Acting Chief, Liaison Division, OLL

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